

# Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, February 11, 2019 is 103.8 (same as last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, February 9, 2019 is 103.8 (same as last Friday's index).

---

## Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (February 11) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, and that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From February 3 to 9, one community-acquired LD case was reported. The female patient, aged 82 with underlying illnesses, lives in Yat Man House, Ho Man Tin Estate, Ho Man Tin.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of February 9, three LD cases had been reported in 2019. In 2018 and 2017, there were 105 and 72 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus which support breathing. People may get infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute the infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water](#)

[Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

---

## **SFST to attend European Financial Forum in Dublin to strengthen financial ties**

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, will leave for Dublin, Ireland, in the early hours tomorrow (February 12) to attend the 4th European Financial Forum (EFF) to promote Hong Kong's strengths as an international financial centre and forge closer financial collaboration with Ireland.

To be held on February 13, the theme of this year's EFF is "Policies and Business Models for a Changing Financial Landscape". Mr Lau will attend the opening session and deliver a closing keynote speech on Hong Kong's strengths as well as how it can help global enterprises capture opportunities in Hong Kong and the Mainland of China amid the changing financial landscape.

During his stay in Dublin, Mr Lau will meet with senior government officials of Ireland and key personnel of the Irish Central Bank and Stock Exchange to share views on efforts to create an enabling environment for financial developments.

Mr Lau will also visit global aircraft leasing companies headquartered in Dublin and meet with leading figures in the sector to exchange views on the latest developments in the aircraft leasing market.

In addition he will meet with representatives of the local financial technology (Fintech) industry to foster Fintech collaboration with Ireland.

Mr Lau will return to Hong Kong in the morning of Friday (February 15). During his absence, the Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Joseph Chan, will act as Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury.

---

## **"M" Mark status awarded to Longines**

# **Masters of Hong Kong 2019 and Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2019**

The following is issued on behalf of the Major Sports Events Committee:

February will be an exhilarating month for major sports events. The Major Sports Events Committee (MSEC) has awarded "M" Mark status to the following major sports events that will be held in February: the Longines Masters of Hong Kong 2019 (February 15 to 17) and the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2019 (February 17).

The Chairman of the MSEC, Mr Karl Kwok, said today (February 11) that these events, like all "M" Mark events, will add colour and vibrancy to Hong Kong and help attract more visitors.

"'M' Mark events showcase Hong Kong's capability to host world-class events and reinforce its position as the events capital of Asia," Mr Kwok said.

"'M' Mark events also help generate economic benefits for Hong Kong by attracting tourists. They also instil a sustainable sporting culture in the community, and help foster a sense of pride and social cohesion," he added.

The "M" Mark System was launched in 2004 to help local national sports associations organise more major sports events and nurture them into sustainable undertakings. Sports events meeting the assessment criteria will be granted "M" Mark status by the MSEC. Funding support will also be provided to some of the event organisers.

The number of recognised "M" Mark events increased from four in 2005 to 12 in 2018. So far, around \$127.3 million has been approved to support recognised "M" Mark events.

For details of other "M" Mark events, please visit [www.mevents.org.hk](http://www.mevents.org.hk). The "M" Mark applications for smartphone users are available for downloading from iTunes as well as Google Play.

---

## **Red flags hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (February 11) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.